

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method of forming a stator comprising:  
providing a stator frame having a frame plate;  
connecting a plurality of key bars to said frame plate at respective connection points, each of said key bars having a dovetail;  
providing a stator core comprising a plurality of laminations each having a dovetail slot formed therein; and  
engaging each of ~~said~~ the plurality of dovetails into respective dovetail slots, wherein so that a plurality only a subset of the plurality of said dovetails engaged in respective dovetail slots contact respective laminations to define respective contact points, the contact points having respective locations along a longitudinal direction of the stator core such that a force load transmitted by said contact points is evenly distributed among said contact points.

2. (previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said contact points have respective locations such that key bar stress at said connection points is minimized.

3. (previously amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said contact points have respective locations such that a stiffness of all said contact points is equal.

4. (previously amended) The method of claim 3 wherein said stiffness varies in accordance with a distance between said contact points and said frame plate.

5. (previously amended) The method of claim 4 wherein said stiffness decreases as the distance of said locations of contact points increases from said frame plate.

6. (currently amended) A method of forming a stator comprising:  
providing a stator frame having a frame plate;  
connecting a plurality of key bars to said frame plate at respective connection  
points, each of said key bars having a dovetail;  
providing a stator core comprising a plurality of laminations each having a  
dovetail slot formed therein; and  
engaging each of said dovetails into respective dovetail slots so that a plurality  
of said dovetails contact respective laminations to define respective contact points, the  
contact points having respective locations along a longitudinal direction of the stator

core such that a force load transmitted by said contact points is evenly distributed  
among said contact points;

~~The method of claim 2~~

wherein said locations of contact points are defined by varying a cross-sectional area of said dovetail slots such that at least two of said laminations respectively have dovetail slots which have different cross-sectional areas.

7. (previously amended) The method of claim 6 wherein said locations of contact points are defined by increasing a size of said dovetail slots in those laminations where a contact point is not defined and decreasing a size of said dovetail slots in those laminations where a contact point is defined.

8. (previously amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said locations of contact points are defined by respectively arranging wedges within some of said dovetail slots to form said contact points.

9-14. (canceled)

15. (previously presented) A method of forming a stator, the method comprising:

providing a stator frame having a frame plate;

connecting a plurality of key bars to said frame plate at respective connection points, each of said key bars having a dovetail; and

providing a stator core comprising a plurality of laminations each having a dovetail slot formed therein;

wherein each of said dovetails engages into respective dovetail slots so that at least one of said dovetails engaged within a respective one of the dovetail slots does not contact the lamination having the respective one of the dovetail slots formed therein and a plurality of said dovetails contact respective laminations to define a plurality of respective contact points along a longitudinal direction of the stator core, said contact points having respective locations along the longitudinal direction of the stator core such that a force load transmitted by said contact points is evenly distributed among said contact points.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein said contact points have respective locations along the longitudinal direction of the stator core such that key bar stress at said connection points is at a minimum.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein said contact points have respective locations along the longitudinal direction of the stator core such that a stiffness of all said contact points is equal.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein a cross-sectional area of the respective one of the dovetail slots in which the engaged respective one of the dovetails does not contact the lamination having the respective one of the dovetail slots formed therein is larger than respective cross-sectional areas of said dovetail slots in those laminations where respective contact points are respectively defined.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising respectively arranging at least one wedge within at least one of the dovetail slots in which the engaged dovetail contacts the lamination to thereby define one of the contact points.